(c) whether it is a fact that ! .5 lakh tons of foodgrains stored in these godowns become unfit for consumption each year; and

(d) the quantity of foodgrains spoiled in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India during the last five years and the market value thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): (a) As on 30.9.2001 the quantity of wheat and rice (inclusive of paddy in terms of rice) stored in the godowns of the Food Corporation of India (FCI) was as follows:—

(Figures in lakh tonnes)

Commodity	In FCI Godowns	With State Agencies	Total
Wheat	116.85	251.41	368.26
Rice	185.90	28.62	214.52
Total	302.75	280.03	582.78

(b) The buffer carrying cost, as per the Budget Estimate 2001 -02, is Rs. 5979 crores.

(c) and (d) The stocks of foodgrains available with the FCI are maintained on scientific lines by qualified staff. Despite this some damage occurs due to various factors like unusual rains, floods, cyclone, etc.

The quantity of foodgrains spoiled in the godowns of the FCI during the last five years and the market value thereof is as given below:—

Year	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Quantity (In lakh MT)	0.56 3[illegible]	1.03 7[illegible]	1.47	2.14
Value(In Rs.lakh)			11846	17128

Tourism Promotion Task Force

*76. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to set up a Tourism Promotion Task Force;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith its terms of reference; and

(c) the fresh steps taken by Government to contain the impact of sharp

decline in tourist traffic in the country in the wake of the recent terrorist's strikes?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Government has constituted a Special Tourism Task Force to deal with the problems arising after the terrorist attack in the United States of America.

(b) and (c) The Special Task Force consists of representatives of concerned Government Departments, tourism industry and tourism consultants. Important decisions taken by the Task Force include the following:

(1) To send appropriate signals to countries all over the world that situation in India is absolutely normal and that there should be no fears about the safety and security of the tourists.

(2) To reorient marketing efforts by focussing on markets in South East Asia, North Asia and Australasia while emphasising the significance of domestic tourism.

(3) To encourage launching of special packages by hotels & travel agents / tour operators with discounted rates. (As a matter of fact, industry has announced various incentive packages already)

(4) Organising Road Shows to dispel perceptions of insecurity in markets of South East Asia and also organising Road Shows in U.K., France, Germany and Austria before and after World Travel Mart.

(5) To approach, on behalf of travel & Tourism trade, other Government of India Ministries / Department / Organisations from time to time for consideration of various issues / demands raised by the trade after there due examination.

(6) To formulate Strategy for marketing in other short haul destination.

(7) To use Internet as an efficient & cost effiective media for promoting tourism to India in the current context.

(8) To arrange special fam tours for foreign media & trade to get a first hand idea of prevalent safety & security in the country.

(9) Not to cancel planned events to avoid panic. Strengthen participation.

(10) To try and tap Chinese outbound market.

(11) Government of India Tourist Offices (GOITOs) abroad to concentrate on foreign travel press to create confidence in the international trade and to conserve resources.